

COMPREHENSIVE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes (Final)
December 2, 2014

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Comprehensive Sustainable Energy Committee was held on Tuesday, December 2, 2014 at 7:30 pm at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center. Present were Committee members Jill Appel (co-chair), Gordon Brockway, Sue Felshin, Gilda Gussin, Jane Hotchkiss (co-chair), Bill Lehr (new member), Mark Myles and Alan Whitney (clerk); committee member Ruthie Bennett was absent. Also present for the meeting were Pamela Cady (Concord/Carlisle Town Energy Manager), Jan Aceti (CMLP Energy Conservation Coordinator), and Concord residents Pat Guiney and Robert Grom.

New CSEC member

Bill Lehr was welcomed as a new member of CSEC.

Meeting minutes

On a motion duly made and seconded, minutes of the November 4, 2014 CSEC meeting were approved as amended.

Upcoming Committee Meetings

The next CSEC meetings are scheduled for Tuesdays January 6, 2015 and January 20, 2015; subsequent CSEC meetings will be scheduled, if possible, on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center.

Upcoming Meetings and Notes of Interest

Ms. Bennett is planning to attend a DOER-sponsored Green Communities meeting on December 3, 2014 (tomorrow); several other CSEC members expressed interest and may also be able to attend.

The Town Meeting Coordination Meeting to plan for the 2015 Annual Town Meeting will be held on December 6, 2014; Ms. Appel and/or Ms. Felshin may be able to attend. On the agenda is discussion of an article sponsored by Ms. Jean Hill to ban plastic bags; might be modeled on existing CA law. Ms. Appel noted that if the petitioner, Scott Richardson, wants CSEC to support the article, he will need to reach out to CSEC.

Ms. Appel has been invited to become a member of the Green Communities Advisory Committee (one of two volunteer advisory positions available on the committee). She stated that she will ask how this would affect her CSEC responsibilities. A new state Green Communities chair is expected to be named by the incoming Governor.

CSEC Annual Report

Ms. Appel appealed for help preparing the CSEC Annual Report due on January 3, 2015; estimates two hours' work. Mr. Myles volunteered; Ms. Felshin and Ms. Hotchkiss volunteered to assist in proof reading/copy editing.

Greening Your Heat Project Management Contract

Ms. Aceti summarized the current status of negotiations with Sagewell, Inc on the GYH Program Management contract:

- Ms. Aceti, Ms. Hotchkiss, Jon Harris (town finance manager) met with Sagewell.
- Among the items discussed:
 - a. Programmable thermostats:
 - 1. Purchase and installation of programmable thermostats. Which thermostat is preferable?
Warranty issues with thermostats.

2. Sagewell is trying to keep things similar to successful MassSave program; MassSave pays contractor \$65 to install programmable thermostat; must provide 1-year warranty; some warranty issues.
3. How is programmable thermostat to be purchased; are better models available for approximately same price? Groton installs \$40 Honeywell thermostats that seem to be quite good, and Ms. Cady noted that even \$25 thermostats are available.
4. Sagewell is ready to commit that all associated contractors will install thermostats.
5. Ms. Appel opined that a single model of thermostat should be selected for the program.
6. How is thermostat and installation to be paid for? Homeowner pays directly for thermostat and town for installation? Vice versa?
7. Sagewell is willing to commit that all installers are to install programmable thermostats.
8. Mr. Lehr moved that the contract Scope of Work include that programmable thermostats will be included as part of the program. Seconded by Ms. Hotchkiss. Passed unanimously. Details to be worked out at January CSEC meetings.
- b. Current status of negotiations with Sagewell (as reported by Ms. Aceti and Ms. Hotchkiss):
 1. Sagewell is unhappy with proposed pricing model.
 2. If homeowner pays for weatherization with credit card, who pays credit card fee (typically ~3.5%)? According to Sagewell, in similar Belmont program, almost everyone has paid the \$299 co-pay with credit card; town pays credit card fee. For 150 home weatherizations with each customer paying \$300 co-pay with credit card, credit card fees are around \$1300. Not clear Concord will agree to pay these fees.
 3. Mr. Whitney made a motion that homeowners will be responsible for any credit-card transaction charges. Ms. Hotchkiss seconded. Passed unanimously.
- c. Mr. Brockway suggested that the program should include financial incentives to persuade homeowners to install both weatherization and a programmable thermostat.
- d. Ms. Hotchkiss suggested that the Sagewell model is based on vendor financing, and the Concord approach is not offering much to vendors.
- e. CSEC members agreed that capturing pilot-related data is important, but it is unclear which data Sagewell is willing to share. CSEC needs more than just simple statistics in order to properly evaluate the status and success of the program; unfortunately, the RFP does not request anything more than statistics. Further discussion with Sagewell is needed to resolve this issue.
- f. Ms. Appel suggested that the number of audits may have to be capped in order to meet budget, and that audits should be done on a first-come, first-serve basis; same for weatherizations until \$145K incentives budget is exhausted.
- g. Will CSEC get copy of weatherization quotes offered to homeowners? Answer: No, not the way RFP is written.
- h. Who pays out rebates? Not clear. Concord folks are accustomed to CMLP processing of rebates. Question: If asked could CMLP process rebates for this program? Answer from Ms. Aceti: Yes.
- i. When does contract start?
- j. Need calendar of significant dates relating to program activities.
- k. Should Sagewell be invited to January meeting? Unanimously “yes”, but need clear agenda for conversation.
- l. Ms. Appel and Mr. Myles suggested that CSEC needs one point-person with Sagewell; Ms. Hotchkiss volunteered.
- m. Ms. Appel reiterated that the GYH project is a pilot program, with the hope (expectation?) that a follow-on program is a real possibility if results of pilot are good.

Ms. Aceti stated that goal is to have contract signed with Sagewell by 12 December, with starting date expected to be sometime in mid-January.

GYH Marketing Program

Ms. Appel stated that the importance of finalizing the GYH contract so that CSEC representative(s) can meet with Sagewell go develop a marketing program. As preparation, Ms. Gussin agreed to develop a list of questions for the basis of a Q&A to be made available to homeowners; need questions by 15 December when plan to meet with Sagewell. Ms. Felshin agreed to act as a central clearinghouse and editor for the collation of this FAQ, which must be understandable by the average homeowner.

The GYH Marketing Subcommittee (Ms. Gussin, Ms. Felshin, Ms. Hotchkiss) agreed to create a draft GYH marketing package by 4 Jan 2015, which will be reviewed at the 13 Jan 2015 CSEC meeting (to which Sagewell will also be invited).

Tuft's Heat Pump Project

Mr. Brockway explained that CSEC is collaborating/cooperating with the Mechanical Engineering department at Tufts University to develop a one-semester course high-level-undergrad/grad course in which students will be asked to explore and answer as best as possible a number of questions about heat pumps (including issues of costs, money saving, effectiveness, carbon footprint, etc., particularly when used in the NE region). The course is scheduled to start in early January 2015. Tufts would like a small CSEC group to meet with students at the beginning and end of the semester. CSEC, in return, has asked that a Tufts representative make a public presentation in Concord about the results of the course (and possibly put on community cable).

A follow-up to the one-semester course might be a graduate-student thesis to investigate effectiveness of heat pumps relative to natural gas, but a student will need to be recruited. Such a project might require the purchase of some monitoring equipment, for which a request for use of GYH funds might be appropriate.

Mr. Brockway indicated that he has also been in contact with a group in Lincoln also investigating some of these issues.

Ms. Aceti noted that a forthcoming NEEP (Northeast Energy Efficiency Council) study is expected to be available soon that also addresses some of the same questions.

Ms. Appel noted that Carlisle is also interested in heat pumps and we should share information.

Other Notes

Ms. Aceti attended the 14th Annual Conference of the Northeast Energy Efficiency Council (NEEP) on 13 Nov 2014 in Framingham. Included in that meeting was a discussion of opportunities for emerging energy technologies in the NE region, along with discussion of potential marketing strategies. Among the participants was NEEP Market Strategies Program Manager Gabe Arnold who might be a resource to assist CSEC.

Public Comments

Town resident Pat Guiney suggested that CSEC should have a presence on Town News & Notices and suggested that CSEC agendas, minutes, etc., should provide for 'Public Comment' rather than 'Citizen Comment') since not all members of the public are citizens.

Town resident Mr. Robert Grom indicated that the town maintains resident e-mail lists that might be useful in marketing the GYH program.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Alan Whitney, clerk